

The recent actions by Sinclair Broadcasting Group point out the dangers caused by media consolidation. Media monopolies degrade the public's ability to know about and participate in local issues, through the elimination of local content and local community input. The efforts by the Sinclair Corporation to influence public opinion by airing a "hit piece" on Sen. Kerry that has been misnamed "news", just days before the Presidential election, demonstrate the threat such monopolies pose.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Please make sure that the public airways are used responsibly, and that broadcasting does not become the exclusive property of faceless corporations with no real interest in, or responsibility to, local communities.

Sincerely,

Mike Anderson